

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NIAMEY 00875 021445Z

45

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-11 OES-03 AGR-05 SP-02 AID-05

EB-07 NSC-05 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01

CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06

XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 PA-01 PRS-01 L-03 /110 W

----- 088950

R 021408Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3002

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

GUTABO/AMEMBASSY BAMAKO 1239

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 0875

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, NG

SUBJ:NIGER TAKES TOUGH STAND ON FOOD NEEDS

1.NIGER IS SHOWING MOUNTING SENSITIVITY ABOUT ITS FOOD DEFICIT, SIGNALING STRONGLY TO DOMESTIC AUDIENCES AND DONORS ALIKE THAT IT DOES NOT APPRECIATE BEING SECOND GUESSED ON SHORTFALL, WHICH HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY PROCLAIMED TO BE 200,000 TONS.

2. RETURN OF CHIEF OF STAFF ALI SAIBOU FROM INSPECTION TRIP TO TAHOUA DEPARTMENT LAST WEEK HAS BEEN USED BY PRESS AND RADIO TO REITERATE OVER-ALL SERIOUSNESS OF HARVEST SHORT-FALL AND TO MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS (A) AT RISK POPULATION FOR COUNTRY AS A WHOLE IS CLOSE TO ONE MILLION (ACTUALLY 988,448), (B) TOTAL NEED OF ALL SEVEN DEPARTMENTS COMES TO 241,000 TONS, (C) OPEN PURCHASES FROM FARMERS ARE 21,000 TONS OF MILLET AND SORGHUM SO FAR THIS HARVEST YEAR, AND STOCKS IN HAND FROM LAST YEAR TOTAL ONLY ANOTHER 20,000 TONS, (D) THUS TOTAL SHORT FALL IS 200,000 TONS, (E) THERE IS ALREADY SUBSTANTIAL MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE TOWARD DISTRIBUTION CENTERS, ESPECIALLY IN AREAS OF TANOUT, DAKORO, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NIAMEY 00875 021445Z

AND MAYAHI, AND GON IS TAKING URGENT STEPS TO INCREASE NUMBER

OF LOCAL DISTRIBUTION POINTS IN ORDER TO HEAD OFF UNMANAGEABLE POPULATION SHIFTS LATER ON.

3. IN ADDITION TO SIDE DISSEMINATION OF FOREGOING ESTIMATES, ON FEBRUARY 27, PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE WENT STRONGLY ON RECORD ENDORSING FIGURE OF 200,000 SAYING THAT IF ESTIMATE IS NOT "ACCEPTED" GON PREPARED TO RELY ENTIRELY ON ITS OWN RESOURCES TO MEET COUNTRY'S FULL NEEDS. PRESIDENT RECALLED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER DJERMAKOYE HAD TOLD MEMBERS OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS ON FEBRUARY 9 THAT GON'S NEEDS ARE 200,000 TONS AND SAID THAT FIGURE HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED INDEPENDENTLY BY THE GON AS EARLY AS AUGUST, AND "CONFIRMED" IN SEPTEMBER. PRESIDENT SAID THAT GON, WITHOUT WAITING FOR DONOR RESPONSE, HAS PROCEEDED ON ITS OWN TO BUY STOCKS IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. IF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY RESPONDS, SAID KOUNTCHE, SO MUCH THE BETTER BUT "IF IT IS NECESSARY WE WILL NOT HESITATE TO DEVOTE THE TOTALITY OF OUR BUDGET TO FEEDING OUR POPULATION."

4. FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL IN SAHEL MARCH 1 CARRIES PRESIDENT'S REMARKS A STEP FURTHER, SAYING THAT "INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS" AGREED AS EARLY AS AUGUST THAT DEFICIT WOULD BE 200,000 TONS AND NOTING THAT THIS WAS BASIS OF PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON DECEMBER 17 OF 200,000 TON FIGURE (NIAMEY 4891). EDITORIAL THEN SCOLDS "CERTAIN MALEVOLENT CIRCLES" FOR IMPLYING THAT SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL IS "CHEATING" ON FIGURES AND UNDERLINES KOUNTCHE'S PLEDGE TO GO IT ALONE IF NECESSARY TO GET NECESSARY FOOD. EDITORIAL OBSERVES THAT LIKE WHEAT AND OIL, URANIUM CAN BE A "WEAPON" AND WANTS IT UNDERSTOOD "EVERYWHERE AND BY ALL THAT WEAPON WILL BE USED IF NECESSARY TO ASSURE POPULATION HAS FOOD AND ENJOYS PROSPERITY". MEANTIME, EDITORIAL CONCLUDES, NIGER WILL MOBILIZE ITS OWN RESOURCES, SINCE NO POLICY MORE DIGNIFIED THAN "ONE WHICH GIVES RELEASE FROM MAKING REQUESTS TO FOREIGNERS".

5. COMMENT
UPSHOT OF FOREGOING IS THAT GON HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY NERVOUS ABOUT EXTENT OF ITS HARVEST SHORTFALL AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS THEREOF. CLEARLY, GOVERNMENT IS IN NO MOOD TO PLAY A NUMBERS GAME ABOUT DIMENSIONS OF CRISIS. WHILE THREATS OF THE SAHEL EDITORIAL SEEM TO HAVE OFFICIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NIAMEY 00875 021445Z

SANCTION, WE CAN PROBABLY TAKE THEM WITH A GRAIN OF SALT AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING. STILL, IT WILL BE SALUTORY FOR DONOR COMMUNITY TO TAKE NOTE OF WHAT SEEM TO BE SIGNS OF A MOOD OF DESPERATION. WE AND OTHERS WILL HAVE TO TAKE HEED OF THIS IN APPROACHES TO GON ON RELIEF MATTERS IN COMING WEEKS, BEING CAREFUL NOT TO PUT OURSELVES IN POSITION OF DIRECTLY CHALLENGING GON ESTIMATES, WHICH, FOR BETTER OR WORSE, HAVE ASSUMED SENSITIVE POLITICAL DIMENSION.

HECK

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, SUPPLIES, FOODS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ullricre
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976NIAMEY00875
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760079-0403
From: NIAMEY
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197603104/aaaadnsk.tel
Line Count: 116
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ullricre
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 APR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <10 AUG 2004 by ullricre>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IGER TAKES TOUGH STAND ON FOOD NEEDS
TAGS: EAID, NG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006